



Consortium of Indo-Pacific
Researchers

Indo-Pacific Weekly Mail August 18-24, 2025

Greetings Colleagues,

The Consortium is pleased to share its latest newsletter for the Indo-Pacific. Press the reply button for your feedback and comments.

South Korean President Visits Washington



Figure 1: US President Trump and South Korean President Lee Jae-myung in the Oval office, Aug. 25, 2025, Image [/whitehouse.gov/](https://whitehouse.gov/)

US President Donald Trump met with South Korean President Lee Jae-myung in the Oval office. The [meeting was held in friendly atmosphere](#) and seems to be productive as South Korea made a trade deal with the US whose details are yet to come. However, before the meeting, Trump posted on Truth Social not to do the business with the South Korea due to a “Purge or Revolution” in the South Korea.

Korean President Lee well managed the negative comment for his country and engaged in the positive discussion with Trump and seek to support the peace in the Korean peninsula. Lee employed a diplomatic strategy of commendation and enthusiasm in the White House meeting to get a more favorable tariff arrangement with South Korea. Also, Trump said, “We’ve known each other and gotten along very well, it’s a great honor to be with you and congratulations on your election. That was a big one, and we’re with you 100%.”

Lee may have adequately prepared for his first foreign policy test while embarking on the trip to DC to meet Trump and strengthening the "ironclad alliance" with the United States. As he was recently elected as the new President of South Korea following political upheaval after the removal of Yoon Suk Yeol, who was ousted from office after imposing martial law. During the meeting with Lee, Trump also mentioned his good relationship with North Korean leaders and intend to meet with Kim Jong Un like his first term.

It is worth noting that South Korea is a crucial ally of the US in East Asia, playing a vital role in maintaining peace and security on the Korean Peninsula. The [United States Forces Korea](#) (USFK) of size of 28,500 is stationed in the South Korea. It was speculated that there may be plans to adjust the role and draw down the size of USFK by the current US administration. However, it is not confirmed yet. The USFK with its South Korean partner have stood together for more than 70 years maintaining Armistice and aiming to stability and peace in the Korean Peninsula.

Furthermore, the US, South Korea, and Japan initiated the trilateral partnership in August 2023 at the Camp David summit to enhance economic, defense, and technological cooperation and to strengthen deterrence in the Indo-Pacific region.

Japan and South Korea Hold Historic Summit in Tokyo

The newly elected South Korean President Lee Jae-myung visited Japan and met Prime Minister Ishiba for his first foreign trip. Both leaders signed a joint statement and seek deeper cooperation on AI, trade, and denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula. They also announced plans to launch a joint task force to tackle shared challenges, including aging populations and declining birth rates. South Korea has made significant strides toward improving its relations with Japan, following a prolonged period of hesitancy that lasted for a decade. The long-standing enmity was a consequence of Japan's colonial occupation of

Korea during the first half of the 20th century and has historically influenced bilateral relations between the two East Asian democracies. [Read More](#)

US and South Korea Kick off Military Exercise

The United States and Republic of Korea (ROK) conduct joint military operation Ulchi Freedom Shield 25 (UFS 25). This annual exercise aims to improve the combined, joint, all-domain, and interagency operating environment, thereby strengthening the alliance's response capabilities.

UFS25 is a defense-focused exercise that includes live-fire, constructive, and field training exercises involving alliance forces and government agencies. Key aspects of the training emphasize conducting all-domain operations by leveraging the assets of various components. [Read More](#)

India Test-Fires Nuclear Capable Missile

India has successfully conducted the test launch of the Agni-5, an indigenously developed intermediate-range ballistic missile capable of delivering a nuclear warhead to targets within a 5,000-kilometre range. The test took place at Chandipur, located in Odisha in eastern India. The launch validated all operational and technical parameters and was carried out under the aegis of the Strategic Forces Command as per Defense Ministry of India. Further, the Agni-5 has a range that encompasses most of Asia, including northern China, and extends into parts of Europe. It is considered an element in India's nuclear

deterrence strategy. Notably, India has long-standing border disputes and faced multiple clashes with its two neighbors China and Pakistan. [Read More](#)

Indo-Pacific Quiz

On August 26, 2021, in which country did 13 US soldiers die in the Abbey Gate Attack?

- a. Pakistan
- b. Syria
- c. Afghanistan
- d. Iraq

Who is President Trump's new appointee as Ambassador to India?

- a. Jorgan K. Andrews
 - b. Sergio gor
 - c. David Perdue
 - d. Anjani Sinha
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Consortium Highlights

- ❖ Event Highlight: CIPR hosted the Report Discussion Event for the project, ***U.S.-Japan Alliance: Strengthening Defense and Security in the Indo-Pacific***, in Washington D.C., on August 22nd, 2025. [Watch B-Roll Here](#).
- ❖ Upcoming Roundtable Discussion: South Asia Quagmire, Sept. 19, 9:00 A.M. EST

Indo-Pacific Quiz Key

Here are the **Answers** for August 17 Newsletter Quiz

Q. India celebrates its Independence Day on August 15. Which country's Independence Day is on August 14?

b. Pakistan

Q. Where is the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson located?

a. Alaska

Contributions: Indu Saxena